

## How to be a Friend to a Victim of Relationship Violence \*

- Most teens talk to other teens about their problems. If a friend tells you things that sound like his or her relationship is abusive, here are some suggestions on ways to help:
- Don't ignore signs of abuse. Talk to your friend.
- Express your concerns. Tell your friend you're worried. Support, don't judge.
- Point out your friend's strengths - many people in abusive relationships are no longer capable of seeing their own abilities and gifts.
- Encourage your friend to confide in a trusted adult. Offer to go with your friend for professional help.
- Never put yourself in a dangerous situation with the victim's partner. Don't try to mediate or otherwise get involved directly.
- Call 911 if you witness an assault. Tell a trusted adult - school principal, teacher, parent, physician, guidance counselor, or school resource officer - if you suspect the abuse but don't witness it.

\*NCPC

## Things to remember

- You have the right to a healthy relationship.
- You deserve better. Do not put up with abuse.
- You are not alone. Teens from all backgrounds are in, have been in or know someone in an abusive relationship.
- You have done nothing wrong. It is not your fault that your partner abuses you.
- The longer you stay in the abusive relationship, the more intense the violence will become. It does not get better over time.
- Being drunk or high is not an excuse for abuse.
- No one is justified in attacking you just because he or she is angry.

## Where to Go for More Information



Office of the Washington State  
Attorney General



Washington State Medical Association



National Crime  
Prevention Council

In case of emergency, call:

**911**

Washington State  
Domestic Violence Hotline  
(24 hours)  
**1-800-562-6025**

Attorney General's Office  
Teen Dating website

<http://www.atg.wa.gov/violence>

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# Teen Dating Violence

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## What is Relationship Violence?

- A pattern of behavior used by someone to maintain control over his or her partner.
- It can take the form of verbal, physical, emotional or even sexual abuse.
- Relationship violence is not about getting angry or having a disagreement.
- In an abusive relationship, one partner is afraid of or intimidated by the other.
- Abuse isn't just hitting. It's yelling, threatening, name calling, saying "I'll kill myself if you leave me," obsessive phone calling or paging, and extreme possessiveness. (NCPC)

## How Prevalent is Teen Relationship Violence?

- According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center and the NCPC, one in four students know someone at their school in an abusive relationship.
- 38 percent of date rape victims are young women between age 14 and 17.
- 70 percent of pregnant teenagers are abused by their partners.

## Warning Signs that You are in an Abusive Relationship:

If you can answer "yes" to any of the below questions, then your partner is being abusive toward you.

- Are you afraid of your partner or afraid to break up?
- Does your partner call you names, make you feel stupid, or tell you that you can't do anything right?
- Is your partner extremely jealous?

- Does your partner tell you where to go and who you can and can't talk to?
- Does your partner tell you that no one else will ever go out with you?
- Do you feel cut off from family and friends because of your partner?
- Do you feel threatened if you say no to touching or sex?
- Have you ever been blamed for having been abused?
- Has your partner ever shoved, grabbed, hit, pinched, held down or kicked you?
- Is your partner *really* nice sometimes and *really* mean at other times (almost like they have two different personalities)?
- Does your partner make frequent promises to change or say that they will never hurt you again?

## Teen Relationship Bill of Rights

*I have the right:*

- To be treated with respect always;
- To my own body, thoughts, opinions, and property;
- To choose and keep my friends;
- To change my mind - at any time;
- To not be abused - physically, emotionally or sexually;
- To leave a relationship;
- To say no;
- To be treated as an equal;
- To disagree; and
- To live without fear and confusion from my partner's anger.

## What to do if my partner is abusive and I want out.

- Talk with your parents, another family member, a friend, your physician, a counselor, a faith or spiritual leader, or someone else you trust. If you remain isolated from friends and family, your abuser has more opportunity to control and abuse you.
- Get help from professionals. Your community will have places you can go for help. Look for help at your physician's office, rape crisis centers, health services, counseling centers, youth organizations, churches or spiritual centers, and other similar places.
- Educate yourself using information found on the Internet.
- If the abuse happens at school, report it to a school counselor or security officer.
- Keep a log of the abuse. You may need it for evidence if you have to take legal action.
- Do not meet the abuser alone. Do not let the abuser in your home or car when you are alone.
- Avoid being alone at school, your job, or on the way to and from places.
- Always tell someone where you are going and when you plan to be back.
- Establish a regular time or place to contact someone so they will know to check on you if they do not hear from you as scheduled.
- Develop a safety plan and rehearse what you will do if the abuser becomes abusive.
- Give yourself some space, take a break from dating.